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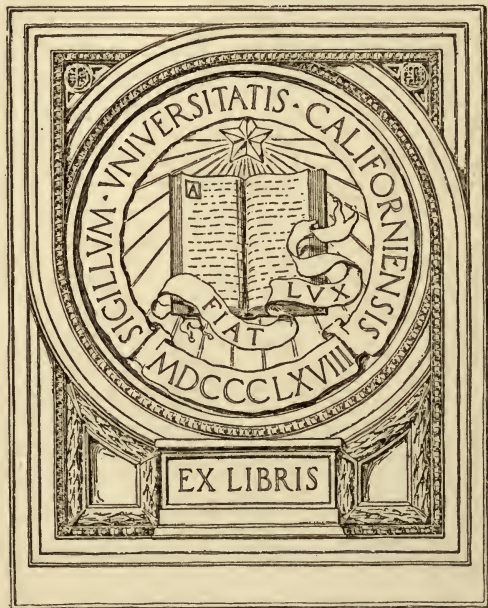
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*Mrs. M. Mc Namar*



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# THE VAIL OF MIST



BY

Mrs. M. McNAMAR.

The book entitled "The Vail of M  
by Mrs. M. McNamar, is a sin  
poem paying high tribute to the wo  
derful natural wealth and beauty of th  
state of Oregon. It is dedicated to the  
schools of that state, and will be fur-  
nished those institutions at reasonable  
per cent above cost of producing.

The regular edition of "The Vail of  
Mist," of which this is a manuscript  
copy, will be carefully revised and  
printed on Duchess Book paper, and  
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"Just Muse," "Down Deep in the  
Woods," "Parodic," and "Other  
Poems" over sixty classified selections  
by Mrs. M. McNamar in one volume,  
cloth bound, price \$1.00.

# THE VAIL OF MIST

BY

MRS. M. McNAMAR

AUTHORESS OF

“Just Muse,” “Down Deep In  
The Woods” and “Other  
Poems.”



DEDICATED TO

THE SCHOOLS OF OREGON



McNAMARS, PUBLISHERS

COTTONWOOD, CALIF.

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## SYNOPSIS

After "Just Muse" first appeared in book form, a reader from the less sunny clime of the great northwest writes attributing poetical inclination to the "wonderful days and the wonderful nights of beautiful Sunshine Valley," (California) and insinuates that the "misty climate" of the northern state gives less pleasant surroundings and leads to less poetical thoughts. Therefore THE VAIL OF MIST has been written with the Webfoot State as the setting and some of its "misty" beauty portrayed therein.

To write the poem, a special study was made of the flora of Oregon and only species chosen that appear within its borders.

Time is pictured in the heavier vegetation. while "Timid Smile" might be interpreted as meaning: a person, absolute happiness or "just a smile" according to the readers fancy.

Happiness in all her beauty,  
In her faith and tryst to duty,  
In youth, in age or in her prime,  
Stands subject to the call of time.

## THE VAIL OF MIST

### PRELUDE

Ye Oregon— wonderland of hill!  
What good spirit came unto thee  
In that age remote and still  
And laid the hand of luxury  
Upon thy brow? Held back no gift;  
Visited thee with showers of weath,  
Endowed thee as none other  
Hath been endowed, with verdure  
Clad, as none other hath been clad.  
Oregon— wonderland of bloom!  
Whence cometh all that growth?  
Why select thee as the favored  
Child, and heap magnificence  
Upon thee in that day of days  
In ancient days, and reserved it  
For a generation yet unborn?  
Oregon— land of mighty trees!  
With bearded faces all, and written  
Father Time's own countenance

Upon their cracked bark, and  
Hoary too, they \*look toward north  
As if to scorn the rays of Sol,  
And take delight in shadows cast.  
They are not shorn by winds, nor  
Cometh frost or beating elements  
To take a toll; but gentle rains  
And MISTS preserves them on for aye.  
Oregon, know ye where dwells  
Those good fairies who doth possess  
The secret of thy blessed state,  
And reveals it unto one who  
Queries for a truth so great?  
What mystic myth of primal day  
Invaded here and willed that  
Giant kings of vegetation rule—  
Even as Sylvanus willed for  
All the wild Lebanon slope, or  
Phaeton scorched Sahara's breast—  
And secreted his marvelous  
Work until this later day?  
What visions rose before that  
Path-finder who looked first

\*It is said that the moss on the trees in Oregon grows more luxuriant on the north sides because of the continual shade.

Upon thy draped form, and saw  
Thee elaborately adorned!  
E'en so the bride awaits her lord;  
When the appointed hour due  
Civilization came and claimed  
Thee as his own. Thou Oregon!

### THE VAIL OF MIST

A Timid Smile once went to play,  
But it was such a misty day,  
She first must find the Vale of Joy,  
Where pleasure reigns without alloy.  
For Timid Smile. how timid she.  
Frightened as all children be,  
At all imaginative wrong,  
And passes real misfortune on.  
But how could Smile attempt to play  
When it was such a cloudy day,  
Such denseness in that fog and mist,  
Where could the Vale of Joy exist?  
But seeking it she went that day.  
For Smile was young and Smile must  
play,  
As all things that have wiliy ways

Are baffled not by cloudy days.  
She knew it must be bright and fair,  
She sought it here, she sought it there,  
And every effort did employ,  
But found it not, the Vale of Joy.  
She hurried through the heath and hedge,  
O'er moor and hill and slope and ledge,  
Through forests wild, o'er rivers deep,  
And up the mountain's rugged steep.  
She tarried in a murky lee,  
Tarrried long and naught did see,  
But hanging low that vail of mist,  
Tarrried longer, now— to wist  
A face up there in that great tree!  
The face of Father Time— ah he  
Could tell her all she needs must know.  
Why further seek, why further go?  
Then stepping softly Timid Smile  
Approached the sanctum, paused awhile,  
And fearing something knew not what,  
His unshorn face, she feared that not,  
Nor giant arms— for giant he,  
His statue formed in that great tree—  
Feared not the shadow casted down,  
Like a sundial swinging half around;  
Feared not his voice or seeing eyes,  
But feared the wisdom of the wise.

Summoned courage, queried coy,  
"Pray where is the Vale of Joy?"

No artifice with Father Time  
Would cause his countenance to shine,  
Or pucker more his furrowed brow,  
Or move or condescend to bow,  
Not even to that Timid Smile,  
Who longed to frisk in play awhile.  
He cast a glance not up, not down,  
Abated breath, in voice profound,  
A breath unfelt and yet was heard,  
An under breath his every word,  
A piney breath morendo tone,  
Breath of winds so lightly blown,  
Winds another age has known,  
Known only in that monotone,  
Winds that rumbled not his hair,  
Great coney knots entangled there,  
Nor bobbed he his mossy chin,  
A chin all wrinkled much and thin,  
Chin, so heavily bewhiskered  
Moving not at all, he whispered,  
Whispered sweetly, soft and low,  
"Ask the fairies they know."

That Timid Smile, how timid she,

Timid as all feminine be,  
Forgets timidity's precept  
When curiosity doth intersept.  
Forgot to fear, forgot reserve,  
From closer range sought to observe  
That shaggy face unsheared, unshorn  
By Father Time so grimly borne;  
Wavered not nor stood in awe  
Of prestige or tradition's law,  
Piped a question, coyness lost,  
To learn the truth so all engrossed,  
Earnest, no impertinence shown,  
"Why are you so overgrown?"  
For questionairs at all not prone,  
And Father Time was never known  
To stand for quiz, but Smile did lisp  
Her question—she a will-o-wisp—  
Forgot himself, and answered "Mist,"  
Lapsed into silence, Smile dismissed.

Then Timid Smile a seeking went,  
To find the fairies all intent;  
But never once had she surmised  
Where they lived, and was surprised  
To find them on the plot of green,  
More fairies than she'd ever seen,  
Right where she, herself would play

If it had been a sunny day.  
Surrounded all by spruce and yew,  
Cascadean peaks a peeking through;  
Fairies, fives and tens and twelves,  
Dancing there all by themselves;  
Dancing on mahala mats,  
With whispering bells keeping taps,  
Were tripping lightly all in line,  
In and through the wild grape vine;  
(It must have been the grape-vine-twist,) }  
And not a step or measure missed.  
Fairies dressed as fairies do,  
All in their fancy costumes, too,  
And never seemed to mind at all  
If rain and mist did on them fall.  
It never soiled their fluffy things,  
Or crumpled up their gauzy wings,  
Wings, all made of lacy fern,  
Sprays lapping over all in turn,  
And trimmed around with fuzzy down,  
Beneath the pussy-willows found.  
On their heads were all new fangled  
Blue and red-bell wreaths that bangled.  
On satin-bell skirts were sprangles  
Of honeysuckle blows and spangles;  
Their bodices of sassafras  
Leaves, laced up with ribbon grass;

Was waving each a cat-tail wand,  
Brought them from the near by pond.

The call for such a festal day,  
Where all the fairies came to play?  
Came all the fairies in the land  
To celebrate a wedding grand.  
And dancing round with all the rest  
The bride so beautifully dressed;  
And never blushed and never bowed  
But mingled with the happy crowd.  
On her head a sweet blue-bonnet,  
With wild pansy blooms upon it,  
Syringa ruch around her neck,  
No other fairy could bedeck  
Herself so fine, although they tried,  
So they let this one be the bride.  
She stood beneath the mistletoe,  
And all the fairies loved her so,  
'Twas sad that they should miss such  
bliss,  
But no one thought to steal a kiss.  
They had no rice or worn out shoe,  
So what did those gay fairies do.  
But take pink, manzanita blooms  
To shower the bride. My, what perfumes!

The luncheon spread for one and all,

For all the fairies at the ball—  
Thimble berries for finger bowls,  
Two big dew-drops each one holds,  
Lambs-quarter and sweet wild cherries,  
Watercress and service berries,  
Buttercups filled with peppermint,  
My, what a minty scent that sent  
Prevading all the atmosphere,  
Its cells of honey nice and clear!  
Grandpa-apples all served up  
To each one in an acorn cup;  
Deer tongue sliced with mustard seed,  
And milk drawn from a big milkweed,  
Into pitcher plants strained and poured,  
And dipped out with a tiny gourd.  
Hazel nuts with sugary fill,  
From the sugar pine on the hill;  
And strawberries so nice and red,  
Never was such a luncheon spread;  
But not one fairy stopped to dine,  
From dancing didn't take the time;  
And none was absent, no not one,  
Except the groom, he didn't come,  
(In fairy-land there are no boys,  
They always put a stop to joys,)  
They missed him not, not e'en the bride,  
Johnny-jump-ups on every side  
Appeared, and peered at fairies all,

At all the fairies at the ball,  
And if they cared to they could call,  
But they were needed not at all,  
And all was light and all was gay,  
Although it was a misty day.

Now wouldn't such a funny sight  
Put all soberness to flight,  
And happiness would take its place  
And shine and sheen on every face?  
But Smile just stood there quite amazed,  
As on this pretty sight see gazed,  
And no discord her presence caused,  
Till all the lovely fairies paused  
Beside her, then she made the query,  
But not one of them, so airy,  
Could tell aught of the Vale of Joy  
Where pleasure reigns without alloy;  
"We know just for ourselves," said they,  
"And only know just for to-day."  
Much abashed that Timid Smile,  
Who longed to frisk in play awhile,  
Loitered on the carpet green,  
Just one other fact to glean,  
The where and why for all that dress  
And spread, and who would ever guess?  
One kindly fairy whispered low,

As if she wanted none to know  
She told; and said 'twould not exist  
Were it not for the rain and mist.

But Timid Smile could never see  
Just how all that could ever be;  
She lingered in a leafy dell,  
The dewy mist upon her fell,  
Fell gently, unperturbed and slow,  
If 'twas not seen she would not know;  
But felt the power of some one eyeing,  
Glancing up she saw one spying,  
His form grotesquely concealed,  
But the tall hemlock revealed  
There Father Time, authentic spy,  
Upon all secrets prone to pry;  
She was astound that he'd perceive  
Her quandary, and would relieve.  
But why surprised when Father Time,  
Who works his will in pantomime,  
When e're dire measures come to view  
Consults his annuals, giving true  
Solution to all that would vex,  
And clears all problems that perplex.  
Experience his chief of aid,  
No event lost, or records fade,  
Though he has for all ages rung

The death knell, no requiem sung  
Or penned for him, but reigning on  
With day his scepter, night his wand,  
As old, so old, still ever young,  
His import spoken by no tongue;  
Yet Timid Smile as old as he,  
And Timid Smile will ever be  
As young; no soberness is worn,  
But great imagination borne  
And flung afield, now would employ  
His council for the Vale of Joy.  
Again from out the sanctom grave,  
Singularly this message gave,  
Gave it softly, sweet and low,  
"Ask the elfkins, they know."

The Smile then hastily did go  
To find the elves, but did not know  
Where they lived, 'twas hard to find,  
To give up, she had half a mind.  
So disappointed with her lot,  
She lingered in a quiet grot,  
And she would stay if she but could.  
Among the fragrant lilac wood.  
But it was such a misty day,  
She dare not stay or try to play,  
But cast about, and there did see

The elves beneath an alder tree.  
And such a sight, would you believe?  
What they were playing, if you please,  
King and court and rule and law,  
And not a court one ever saw,  
And not a king one ever knew,  
So how did they know what to do?  
But know they did, and would extol  
Their knowledge of the rigmarole  
That goes with coronation day,  
Each and every part could say.  
No greater scene could ever be  
Than that beneath that alder tree.  
The king sat on a prickly pod,  
And ruled them with a golden-rod.  
It was the golden rule, he said,  
That they might all become well bred.  
With guards and heralders and dukes  
And lords, (but none of them were dupes.)  
You see the elves are only boys,  
So all the girls had to be toys.  
A black-eyed-Susan for the maid.  
(No heed to orders ever paid,)  
March marigold to be the page,  
They found it by the spicy sage;  
The aid de camp, a real elf,  
(Of most importance to himself,)  
Court jester was no foolish clown,

But just a great big daff-a-down-  
Dilly, and it did look silly,  
Standing there, a yellow lily,  
Without a move, or word to say,  
And no attention did it pay  
To king or court or aid de camp,  
Indeed, it looked more like a lamp.  
What do you think they had for queen?  
No fairer one was ever seen,  
A lily of the valley stood  
Right in the place a good queen should.  
And what a queen, and what a brace,  
And what a throne those two did grace!  
Wild morning-glories up side down  
Were worn for hats, except the crown,  
And that was just a buffalo bur  
They found beside a big red fir.  
The weapon for each guard so bold,  
How boastingly and proud to hold  
Shooting stars, and they could shoot  
Arrows made of arrow root.  
The trumpeters could call and chant  
Announcements through a trumpet plant.  
Their canopies were big mushrooms  
All topped off with sorrel top plumes;  
Seating conveniences were found,  
Toad-stools enough to go around;  
But not a single elf to pay

The least heed to that rainy day,  
Not e'en the queen to stew and fret  
Because her gown was damp and wet.  
But each duke held a parasol,  
An umbrella plant was all,  
Imagined that it kept them dry,  
The poor-man's weather-glass grew nigh,  
Although it called for still more rain,  
No melancholy\* on then came,  
Now Timid Smile, all unannounced,  
Came to the king, and not denounced,  
She pled her cause, but none could bear  
Witness as to when or where  
Or how she'd find the Vale of Joy,  
Where pleasure reigns without alloy.  
But said that each and every elf  
Had surely found it for himself.  
When questioned why the mushrooms  
grew  
To over size, the least elf drew  
The Smile aside, and then dismissed  
Her with this simple missive "Mist."

Now all befuddled, Timid Smile,  
Who longed to frisk in play awhile,

\*The presence of the poor man's weather-glass is supposed to bring melancholy

Went back to Father Time once more,  
Found him on Lake Waldo's shore;  
Visioned in that stalwart oak,  
Careful lest she might provoke  
His majesty, but half inclined  
To think he was of twaddling mind.  
Twice now he had sent her wrong,  
Yet imaged there so staunch and strong,  
Strong for truth and strong for right,  
For greatest mysteries brought to light;  
Doubt must flee before his face,  
Still for a moment held its place  
Within the heart of Timid Smile,  
Not to degrees that would beguile  
Her to design or skepticize,  
None such as Smile could theorize  
Or realize Time had the power  
To limit her that very hour.  
With hope the ruling element,  
Pursued the quest with good intent;  
No artifice did she employ,  
"Pray where is the Vale of Joy?"  
Hark! Was he chuckling? Nay, ah nay!  
'Twas just a branch that chanced to sway,  
Swaying gently, and a fluttering  
Of leaves in faintest muttering,  
Muttering softly, sweet and low,  
"Ask the witches, they know

Again the Smile was put to test,  
To weigh desire and interest  
'Gainst failure and uncertainty,  
And ascertain integrity.  
While lingering upon the hill,  
On Pinhead hill, so steep and still.  
She came upon the witches three,  
And pausing there what did she see?  
Witches all dressed up so grand,  
Like witches of no other land,  
And riding too, and did not stay  
Because it was a misty day.  
Cared not if ferbelows were spoiled,  
Just so their pleasure was not foiled;  
And ne'er did witches act like they,  
So frivolous and light and gay.  
Powdered up their hooked noses  
With pollen from the pink wild roses.  
Their petticoats were all befrilled  
With redbuds that some bush had spilled,  
(Because the witches love them so\*  
The redbuds cling to them you know,)  
And buttoned on with great buff balls,  
Patched up water leaves for shawls,  
The pinking iron had been around,

\*According to tradition the redbud, sometimes called Judas trees, are the favorite rendezvous for witches.

And every scallop it had found,  
And seamed so neatly at each gore  
No one could tell, and each one wore  
A dogwood blossom for a hat,  
What headgear could compair with that?  
Beau catchers too, (but goodness knows  
Witches never do have beaux,)  
Forget-me-nots and tulips, too,  
In button holes a sticking through;  
And laurel leaves, as if to say  
They'd won the honors of the day.  
Holding, as their trade requires  
Scepters made of gooseberrie briers,  
And crooked too, but goosie folks  
Like witches do not care for jokes,  
Therefore they never once did guess  
How out of line was all their dress.  
As witch or fairy, one must be  
In keeping with the place, you see.  
Steeds, bless you were not merely brooms,  
But gigantic snow plant blooms;  
As crimson as the crimsonest,  
And against those stirrups pressed  
Lady-slippers, what did inspire  
Those witches to such gay attire,  
And gave them mounts that they might  
go  
Way up where lies the summer snow?

Straight for Mount Hood's hooded head,  
Was aiming there, and on they sped,  
But never moved a peg, not they,  
Just mind it was that sped away.  
And all was song and all was gay,  
Regardless of that misty day.

Seems this great sight would then beguile  
That Timid Smile to smile a smile.  
She once again forgot the quest,  
By their garbs so all impressed;  
She watched those witches at their play,  
And wondered what on earth to say,  
Ventured near and voiced her need,  
The witches gave her little heed,  
But if they knew they'd surely tell,  
"For," they said "You know quite well  
We never keep good secrets long,  
And never tell a thing that's wrong."  
But Smile still lingered on the hill,  
Lingered there a moment till  
She ask the witch that was in charge,  
What made the snow plant grow so large.  
The witch, so very sober now,  
A serious look upon her brow,  
She gave her face a funny twist,  
And leaning near she whispered "Mist,"

Then urged her steed and leaped a mile  
She thought, and left the Timid Smile.

Now that was such a sad mistake  
For one like Father Time to make,  
Sending Smile to witch and elf,  
He ought to know the truth himself.  
She parlied near a crooked crook,  
A crooked crook of Tillamook,  
Again she sought the sanctom old,  
Now trying to appear so bold;  
Viewed him in that lengthly column  
Of myrtle wood, it stood so solemn,  
So solemn and with dignity,  
That does behest one such as he;  
Viewed and saw imprinted there  
The woe and grief and blank despair  
Of ages that the world has known,  
And joy and peace and love that's flown  
Afar, and scattered the sublime;  
Stamped on the brow of Father Time.  
Virtues and vice, since morning prime,  
Stamped on the brow of Father Time.  
More softly now, she might annoy,  
"Pray where is the Vale of Joy?"  
Again that whisper, sweet and low,  
"Ask the pigmies, they know."

Then Timid Smile went wandering,  
While wandering was pondering,  
Pondering what she'd seen that day,  
Wondering if her quest would pay.  
As it was she chanced to be  
In Pleasant Valley by the sea,  
And just as she would turn aside  
A groop of happy folks she spied.  
Pigmies all down in the glade,  
Gathered there to play old maid,  
And not a maiden there, not one,  
(I'm very sure they wanted none.)  
Instead they'd gathered wild sweet peas,  
And grooped them up in twos and threes,  
And each one chose his own bouquet,  
Now wasn't that a funny way  
To play old maid? O, dear me,  
They sang the Ranzy Tanzy Tee!  
And left no flower to wilt and fade  
And pine away as the old maid.  
Each one thought he had a daisy,  
(Pigmies' minds are always hazy,)  
Each one felt himself a dandy,  
And, because they grew so handy,  
Wore two big dandelions for show,  
But not a puff of wind to blow  
Away a dandies' empty head,  
But a heavy fog instead

Settled down, and then began to  
Fall a gentle rain, but then who  
Cared? For although they were dressed  
All up in their Sunday best,  
A little rain would harm them none,  
And only make for greater fun;  
'Twould brighten up their dusty clothes,  
And make them handsomer as beaux—  
Sweethearts to those sweet bouquets;  
Of three sweet-peas in sweet nosegays.  
Wearing fox-gloves on their scrawny  
Hands, and rogue on faces tawny,  
(Rogue, you know, was all the vogue,  
They found it by the river Rogue,  
But never could a river be  
As roguish as a pig-o-me!)

Leopard plant for waistcoats neat,  
Those dappled leaves could not be beat  
For coats, but vests they did not need,  
Neck ties, each a wapoto reed,  
Cedar burs to hold them 'round,  
What better tie clasp could be found?  
To wear a hat each did refuse,  
Good gracious, they forgot their shoes!  
But they were such a happy lot,  
No difference what they had forgot,  
Nothing could put a ban or faze  
Or curb upon their jovial ways.

Two big buckeyes watched up there  
From branch to see the game played fair,  
But not a one would think to cheat,  
Or care a speck if he got beat.  
To interrupt it seemed a shame,  
But in this case no one could blame  
Timid Smile, for diligently  
She'd followed up the quest, you see,  
And diligence and heedfulness  
Eventually will meet success;  
Therefore she summoned courage new,  
Proceeded then to interview  
The pigmies on the theme at heart,  
But not a quay could they impart.  
Contented all in their own way,  
And minded not that misty day.  
When quized about those big buckeyes,  
What made them so immense in size,  
Firmly those pigmies did insist  
The secret of it lay in mist.

Back to Father Time she hurried,  
Doubtful now and somewhat worried,  
Lest that bard be mocking her,  
His presence in that douglas fir.  
So gloomy was his form, and dark,  
His grimy face in that black bark,

Doubted if he really knew  
Just who it was could tell her true;  
With all his wise judicious looks,  
No great amount of wisdom brooks;  
Regardless of his gift of years,  
And his high place among the peers,  
The honor dignity and fame  
Characterizing his great name,  
Experience and prestige too,  
To back his word, and prove he knew,  
Yet, withal he'd sadly blundered,  
And the Timid Smile now wondered,  
Wondered if he was always just  
To the children of his trust;  
Worthy of exalted praise  
That the world so proudly gave,  
And Timid Smile among the great  
To stand in awe of his high state,  
Now sought him that he might convoy  
The quest to find the Vale of Joy.  
Time once again unconsciously,  
Gave her a clew, so thoughtlessly,  
Gave it softly, sweet and low,  
"Ask the brownies, they know."

On the banks of Tumalo creek,  
Diligently the Smile did seek,

And found one brownie all alone,  
Down in a glade so overgrown.  
So overgrown with night shades blue,  
And poison oak and thistles too,  
Wild parsnip plants and cancer roots,  
Stagger brush and rattlesnake shoots;  
So overgrown with great smart weeds,  
With wahoo brush and loco seeds.  
Withal 'twould be a pretty pass  
If brownie fell among that mass  
Of harmful things, but fell he not.  
Their harmful natures he forgot,  
For he was riding like the wind,  
And never stopped or seemed to mind,  
About unpleasant things, or thought  
Himself alone, or trouble bought.  
But on he went, and such a steed,  
It was a tiger lily reed  
Bended down and he had climbed  
Upon it and when there did find  
Such a horse as ne'er before  
A brownie had to travel o'er  
Heath and hedge and bramble brier,  
He proved himself a galant flier.  
No saddle nor a reign to grip,  
No curbing bit or lashing whip,  
But larkspurs on his pointed heels,  
(You know a lily never feels)

But brownie never tried to goad  
His steed along that pleasant road,  
The road that flatters and decoys,  
And leads to superficial joys.  
He thought he was a knight of old,  
And making for the great stronghold,  
Yonder in that tamarack grove  
A rendezvous where robbers clove;  
And ne'er a brownie rode like that,  
A feather grass stuck in his hat,  
And 'twas a feather in his cap  
That he came through with no mishap.  
Now Timid Smile had witnessed much,  
Seemed inevitable that such  
Happy scenes would give the clew,  
And she would know just what to do.  
But truth and light cannot exist  
When shadowed by a "Vail of Mist."  
More timid now, this Timid Smile,  
Who longed to frisk in play a while,  
Asked the brownie if he'd mind  
To tell where she'd be apt to find  
The secret of the Vale of Joy,  
Where pleasure reigns without alloy.  
"The Vale of Joy that is for you?  
I know not where, I tell you true,  
Such knowledge I cannot impart,  
My Vale of Joy lies in my heart."

But Smile forgot the quest in trend,  
And saw that tiger lily bend  
And break not under weight oppressed,  
The secret of its strength not guessed,  
But asked the why for its great size,  
The brownie, very much surprised,  
He motioned Smile to bend and list,  
While he softly whispered "Mist."  
Then hastened on with greater speed,  
And gave no thought or further heed  
To Timid Snile there by his side;  
He thought he traveled far and wide,  
But never moved from out his track,  
The lily bending forward, back,  
How happy did that brownie feel,  
To him it was a tiger real;  
In those leaps and bounds and springs,  
Declared it beat Pagasus' wings.

'Twas such a mystifying thing  
How mist could cause to be or bring  
All that wonderous over growth,  
Quickly Smile forgot them both,  
Both brownie and the lily too,  
A weary way she did pursue,  
Back to Father Time she went,  
On the quest still so intent,

Intent to find the Vale of Joy,  
Where pleasure reigns without alloy.  
Now Father Time said not a word,  
Appeared as if he never heard;  
So still and tall and gaunt and grim,  
Pictured in the trunk and limb  
Of a dead pine, and ne'er was known  
A dead pine to as much as moan.  
Dead and rigid, stiff and cold,  
(The end of everything we're told,)  
All fell away his hair and beard,  
Much more the Timid Smile now feared  
Lest 'twas a ghost of long ago  
To haunt and reprimand her, so  
She turned and mid a denser haze  
A familiar sight met her gaze.  
A sight as old as Father Time,  
So common too, but most sublime.  
'Tis common things that are sublime,  
And in the common things we find  
The seat of all our happiness,  
And the soul of what will bless;  
For common things are shared by all.  
And in the sharing blessings fall  
Anew to all who are concerned,  
Shared in part, ten fold returned.

A robin came and sat to preen  
His feathers, when the Smile had seen  
Him perched upon the nettle bough,  
And was not nettled— tell me how  
Anything would dare to settle  
On the needles of the nettle—  
Robin perched and never seemed  
To mind, and in his presence gleamed,  
Gleamed the theory and the theme,  
The robin ever prone to queme.  
Then Timid Smile, aweary now,  
Approached the needle nettle bough.  
“O robin, you have traveled through  
This great land, I beg of you  
To tell me of the Vale of Joy,  
Where pleasure reigns without alloy.  
For I am Smile, I want to play,  
But this is such a misty day,  
How can a Smile e’er dare to stay,  
Where all the land is dreary, gray?  
I asked of Father Time to tell,  
I thought he’d surely know so well,  
But never knew it, no, not he,  
But told me other folks to see.  
I asked the fairies and the elves,  
They only knew just for themselves,  
The witches and the pigmies too,  
And brownie, seemed that no one knew,

But they it was who Father Time  
Told me was versed along that line."  
The robin perching on that bough,  
Perched and listened, listened how  
That Timid Smile had sought to find  
The Vale of Joy, and none was kind  
Enough to tell her when and where  
She, herself might enter there.  
Listened, heeded, harkened well,  
And then the truth to her would tell.

"Ho! Father Time is such a sage,  
Has no conception of the age;  
Sending you to fairy folks,  
Why elves and such are only jokes!  
A wonder that he did not say  
Lubentia or such as they  
That lived way back in mythic times  
When every one had mythy minds.  
For imaginary things like they  
On their own imaginations play,  
Know not the trouble that provokes  
The lives and minds of other folks.  
'Tis so if one cannot impart  
The joy that lies in his own heart  
To others, then a myth is he,  
And only mythy things will see.

Hark! This is not a mythy age,  
But an age when truth must wage  
And wedge its precepts into mind.  
That all the world might know its kind.  
Now verily I tell you this,  
The Vale of Joy is not a myth,  
But genuine, and it is real,  
And not a place, but what you feel;  
In everything it is revealed,  
On every face its stamp is sealed  
And every grace it does employ,  
Behold it now, the Vale of Joy!"

Then robin when his story told.  
Lo! afar the mist had rolled,  
And splendor draped the earth and skies,  
The Smile stood there with opened eyes.  
How could she then help but play  
When it was such a lovely day?  
O'er yonder hill appeared the bow,  
In yonder field the sun aglow;  
In every tree and shrub and flower,  
In every nook and leafy bower,  
Visions of that Vale of Joy,  
Where pleasure reigns without alloy;  
And fresh and bright and fair—to wist,  
What made it so? THE VAIL OF MIST.







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